(e) the cases detected/registered and their disposal; and

(f) whether PDS has fulfilled people's aspirations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (e) As per information received from States & UT Governments by the end of November 2008, there are 4,97,715 Fair Price Shops in the country. During the last three years (*i.e.* from January 2006 to November 2008), 76249 Fair Price Shops licences were suspended/cancelled/Show Cause Notices were issued/FIRs were lodged against such licencees. 13348 persons were arrested/prosecuted/convicted. During the last three years, in 425 cases detention orders were passed under the Prevention of Black-marketing and Maintenance Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980, by the State Governments/UT Administrations.

Evaluation reports on TPDS received in 2005 had pointed out diversion/leakages of TPDS foodgrains in a number of States & UTs. An allegation of diversion/leakages amounting to Rs.31500 crore was mentioned in a press report in September 2007 (Times of India dated 17.09.2007). However, this figure was highly exaggerated and misleading.

Subsequent reports on concurrent evaluation of TPDS by NCAER in 12 States have shown improved performance of TPDS in many of these States.

(f) Targeted Public Distribution System has been ensuring food security for BPL and AAY in the country.

Ban on future trading

1304.SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN:
SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would ban future trading in 25 agricultural commodities as recommended by Parliamentary Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution; and

(b) if so, the time-frame thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) At present there is no such proposal.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) above.

Import of wheat

1305.SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that around 50 lakh tonnes of wheat have been imported at a huge loss to the exchequer;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government paid to the foreign traders exorbitant price upto nearly Rs, 16,000 per tonne against the minimum support price of Rs. 8,500 per tonne which need inquiry; and